

**Purpose and Need**  
**Salome Mesa and Bull Mountain South Pipelines**  
**Tonto Basin Ranger District**

**Date:** 4/13/2020

**ID Team Leader:** Eric Hoskins

**Project Name:** Salome Mesa and Bull Mountain South Pipelines

**Project type:** Structural Range Improvement

**Target start date:** 05/01/2020

**Target finish date:** 05/01/2021

Expected NEPA Documentation Type: Categorical Exclusion (DM required)

If Categorical Exclusion, select Category: 32.2 (9) Implement or modify minor management practices for range allotment when no allotment mgmt plan

**Project location:** The project Salome Mesa and Bull Mountain South Pipelines are located on Dutchwomen East Grazing Allotment on Tonto Basin Ranger District. The project is two separate pipelines with one located near F.S. road 93 near Bull Tank and second located near F.S. road 3694. The legal location of the project is Township 4N, Range 13E, and Section 7 as well as Township 4N, Range 12E, and Sections 1, 3, 10 and 12.

**Vegetation type:** Sonoran Desert Scrub

### **Existing Condition**

The Dutchwoman East Allotment on the Tonto Basin Ranger District is permitted for 175 Cows and 96 yearlings with an Allotment Management Plan signed in 1993. The basic goal of the management plan is to improve resource conditions on the Dutchwoman Allotment while maintaining a viable livestock operation. Some of the management objectives identified include:

- Accommodate riparian recovery on Salome Creek
- Improve management to increase the are of distribution of livestock from 40% to 80-90% of suitable acres on the allotment using Forest Service Guidelines and Standards.
- Achieve proper use of rangeland to improve vegetation on a greater percentage of allotment acreage to improve rangeland resource objectives.
- Use smaller pastures and more intense grazing for a shorter time period as a tool to accomplish more unified distribution.
- Manage livestock to achieve multiple use resource objectives while maintaining an economical livestock operation.

As livestock are rotated through pastures on the allotment compliance checks and allotment inspections have indicated some areas of distribution could still be improved upon in order to achieve proper distribution and use of the 80-90% of suitable acres. These areas are located in

Management area 6J which manages for a variety of renewable natural resources with one of the primary emphasis on livestock forage production.

## **Desired Conditions**

As described in the Tonto National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan on replacement page 42. Standards and guidelines state that a minimum of four waters per section and one water per section in big game key areas should be provided. In management area 6J livestock should be managed at Level D. Level D management for livestock includes:

*Management seeks to optimize production and utilization of forage allocated for livestock use consistent with maintaining the environment and providing the multiple use of the range. From all existing range and livestock management technology, practices may be selected and used to develop cost effective methods for achieving improved forage supplies and uniform livestock distribution and forage use... Cultural practices may be combined with fencing and water developments to implement complex grazing systems and management methods.*

The Tonto National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan states that rangeland in less than satisfactory condition will be treated with improved grazing management along with the installation of structural and non-structural improvements (pg 195). Also to develop structural improvements in association with AMP's to maintain utilization at levels appropriate with management intensity and AMP objectives.

## **Current Management Direction**

The Dutchwoman East Allotment has an active term grazing permit that authorizes a deferred rest rotation. Throughout the years water developments have been constructed on the allotment to relieve distribution problems. The 1993 Allotment Management Plan for the Dutchwoman Allotment identifies current management direction including the need for Structural range improvements, indicating that "Fencing and extensive water developments are critical to the effectiveness of this management plan."

## **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of this project is to add additional water sources to the Bull Mountain and West Lake pastures on the Dutchwoman East Allotment to improve livestock distribution. This would also provide wildlife with additional reliable water sources in dry areas of the pasture where permanent water is lacking. The need is to comply with direction found in the Tonto National Land and Resource Management Plan and to move the allotment towards our desired conditions.

## **Proposed Action**

This project consists of two separate pipelines each connecting an existing water system to a new trough. The two projects have been separately labeled as Bull Mountain South pipeline and Salome Mesa South Pipeline. Both projects consist of HDPE pipe being laid above ground using horses and then a trough being moved into place with a ranger from existing forest service roads

numbers 93 and 3694. Ground disturbance is limited to trough placement and livestock congregation at trough location.

## **Design Features**

The pipeline will be laid above ground and just off of the roadway to conceal it from the casual observer for the majority of the stretch. The troughs will be leveled before placement. The troughs will also be required to have a usable escape ramp and a functioning float.

## **Implementation Timeline:**

Initial Scoping should be completed by May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and implementation is expected to begin by June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

Please send your questions, concerns, or mitigations to:

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